



Monkeypox Update for Municipal Officials

Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by monkeypox virus. Beginning in May of this year cases of monkeypox began to be reported in countries that do not normally report monkeypox, including the United States. For the most up-to-date number of monkeypox cases in Connecticut and throughout the United States, please visit: **[2022 U.S. Map & Case Count | Monkeypox | Poxvirus | CDC](#)**. While most people impacted to date by the current outbreak have been men or transgender, gender expansive or non-binary people who have sex with men, anyone can get monkeypox and the risk of monkeypox is not limited to people who are sexually active.

Symptoms of monkeypox can include fever, headache, muscle aches and backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills, exhaustion, and a rash that can look like pimples. Sometimes, people get a rash first, followed by other symptoms; others only experience a rash.

Monkeypox can spread from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts two – four weeks. Monkeypox can spread from person-to-person through: direct contact with the infectious rash, scabs, or body fluids; contact with respiratory secretions of an infected person; and/or touching items (such as clothing or linens) that previously touched the infectious rash or body fluids of an infected person. In addition, pregnant people can spread the virus to their fetus through the placenta. Unlike COVID-19, people who do not have monkeypox symptoms cannot spread the virus to others.

The public health system is currently working to contain the outbreak by encouraging people who have been diagnosed with monkeypox to isolate until their illness is over and by conducting contact tracing to identify people who have had close contact with people who have been diagnosed with monkeypox. Contact tracing teams from Uncas Health District and Ledge Light Health District are receiving reports of identified local cases and working to identify people who might have been exposed.

There is currently a very limited supply of vaccine available. In Connecticut vaccine is available to people identified by public health as having had a known exposure to a person with monkeypox within the last 14 days. In addition, people who meet all of the following criteria can be vaccinated: are 18 or older AND are a gay, bisexual or other man and/or transgender, gender non-conforming or gender non-binary person who has sex with men AND have had multiple or anonymous sex partners in the last 14 days. People meeting these criteria who would like to receive the vaccine can contact one of 15 vaccine providers across Connecticut. In our region, the vaccine is being provided by Community Health Center in New London and Planned Parenthood in Norwich.

People can protect themselves from getting monkeypox by avoiding close, skin-to-skin contact with people who have a rash that looks like monkeypox; by avoiding contact with objects and materials that a person with monkeypox has used; and by washing their hands often with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, especially before eating or touching their face and after using the bathroom.

For up-to-date information and new developments, please visit our websites at www.llhd.org or www.uncashd.org

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